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### Version of attached file:

Published Version

### Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

### Citation for published item:

Kliot, N. (1986) 'The territorial disintegration of a state : the case of Lebanon.', Working Paper. University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Durham.

### Further information on publisher's website:

<http://www.dur.ac.uk/sgia/>

### Publisher's copyright statement:

### Additional information:

Series editors: John Dewdney Heather Bleaney.

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UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

مركز دراسات الشرق الأوسط

والمدراسات الإسلامية

CENTRE FOR MIDDLE EASTERN  
AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

**The Territorial Disintegration of a State:  
The Case of Lebanon**

by  
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12 FEB 2001

Occasional Papers Series  
No. 30 (1986)  
ISSN 0307 0654

48720

V.1

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University of Durham, England, 1986

Series editors: John Dewdney and Heather Bleaney

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## PREFACE

States are sovereign bodies when their existence is recognized by other states and their autonomy within defined territorial limits is generally respected.<sup>1</sup> According to this definition, Lebanon is an independent sovereign state in name only. The country is divided de facto into five and more territorial entities of the Christians, Shiites, Druze and Israeli- and Syrian-occupied areas. The Lebanese government, which has the power of sovereignty, does not exercise internal sovereignty and does not enforce law and order.

Lebanon is a pluralistic society, composed of Christians and Moslems. Each of the two main religions is segmented: the Christians are divided into Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, Armenians and Protestants; the Moslems are divided into Shiites, Sunnis and Druze. The history of the Lebanese is a history of continuous conflict between Christians and Moslems, and among Christians and Moslems themselves.<sup>2</sup> Since independence, Lebanon has had two civil wars, in 1958 and 1975-76, both a reflection of ethnic schism and foreign intervention. Since 1976, large parts of Lebanon have been occupied by Israel.

The purpose of this paper is to describe and analyse the process by which the Lebanese state compromised and gave away its sovereignty; and to review and analyse the process of territorial disintegration of the Lebanese state and its territorial division at present.

## 1. THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE LEBANESE STATE

Dismemberment is a process of internal disintegration of a state and a replacement of the legal government and the state apparatus by substitute government or governments. The political entities which contest and challenge the legal government manifest in their more advanced development a strong similarity to states, hence the terminology "quasi-states" or "proto-states". The proto-states have all the features of a state: they control people, territory, army and resources. Often they establish a governmental administration, collect taxes and provide public services, functions which are generally considered as the responsibility of legal governments. Unlike insurgency, in which the guerrillas are motivated by ideology and want a total change in government, dismemberment is founded on the separate development of ethnic communities. Dismemberment often takes place in states which were mal-integrated from their very beginnings and which failed to build a unifying viable state-idea. The separate community development in countries such as Canada, Lebanon, Nigeria or Cyprus has a disintegrative impact, and could lead to dismemberment.<sup>3</sup>

Central to the process of separate development is the question presented by Knight<sup>4</sup>: "What scale of population is proper to enjoy government of its own?" To what degree do states have to allow separate development of communities based on national, ethnic, linguistic, religious and cultural differences? Even the stable societies in Europe are in danger of being torn apart by the peripheral nationalism of Catalonians and Basques, Scots and Welsh, Bretons and others.<sup>5</sup>

The process of dismemberment, based on separate development of ethnic communities, can endanger the viability of states when it becomes regional - i.e., when separate development takes place in well bounded regions. Where economic inequalities accompany the separately developed regional communities, dismemberment is accelerated. Economic and social inequalities may strengthen ethnic, religious or linguistic differences and therefore their disintegrating impact. Doherty<sup>6</sup> showed that within Northern Ireland, 77 per cent of the variation in unemployed levels was due to low social class and Roman Catholic religious affiliation. Concordance between ethnic, cultural, political and economic cleavages takes place in other societies too.<sup>7</sup>

Dismemberment can lead to a partitioned state when the process reaches a state of "no alternative" (Ireland, Palestine, Cyprus).

In line with the model outlined above, Lebanon is a disintegrated state in which the legal government has lost its sovereignty over most of its territory and population. Instead of the Lebanese state, four or five "quasi-states" or "proto-states" have appeared, each of which provides the major functions of a state to the well-being of its citizens.

The process of dismemberment of the Lebanese state reflects a nation in which the centrifugal forces outweighed centripetal forces. The most important centripetal force, the state-idea or the raison d'être of Lebanon was weak from the earliest stages of the nation-building. The sectarian schism was built into the raison d'être of Lebanon and its polity, and that schism weakened the state.

It is claimed here that the Lebanese state lost its sovereignty because it was built on a fragile state-idea and did not succeed in developing a strong political regime able to overcome the basic cleavages in Lebanese society. An important part of the weak raison d'être and polity was Lebanon's tendency to rely on foreign powers in solving its

internal affairs. Interference by foreign powers further decreased the viability of the state until it totally collapsed during the civil war of 1975-76.

#### The Raison d'Être of Lebanon: Sources of Integration and Disintegration

The origin of the state idea of Lebanon can be traced to the "Règlement Organique" agreement which was signed in 1861 between the ruling Ottoman Empire and Britain, France, Russia, Austria and Prussia. Britain and France became involved in the affairs of the region after a sectarian conflict erupted in 1860 and thousands of Christians were killed by their Druze neighbours.<sup>8</sup> France, the defender of the Christian Maronites, and Britain, defending the Druze interests, pressed the Ottoman Empire to find a solution to the civil strife. The "Règlement Organique" gave autonomous status to Mount Lebanon as an Ottoman Province (Mutesarrifate), an area settled mostly by Maronites and other Christians and by Druze. The province of Mount Lebanon excluded the coastal towns of Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon and Tyre and the Beqaa valley (Fig. 1). It was ruled by a Catholic governor and an advisory council representing all the communities living in the area.<sup>9</sup> The Mutesarrifate lasted until World War I and, during that time, the Mount Lebanon province enjoyed peace, educational development and prosperity. It was during this period and in this territory of Little Lebanon (Petit Liban) that the first state-idea of future Lebanon was shaped. Hourani<sup>10</sup> called the first state-idea of Lebanon "the ideology of the mountain". The ideology of the mountain is specifically the ideology of the Maronite community. This ideology had three major aspects: (i) the self-perception of the Maronite Church as living by itself, protecting itself from attack by the Moslem rulers of the cities and the plains; (ii) the second aspect of the Maronite ideology is that of a "nation", as living within a broader political framework. Implicit in this idea was a certain religious pluralism: Sunnis, Druze and Maronites allied together under this idea. Emphasis is placed on the role of the Druze Emir of the seventeenth century, Fakhr al Din II. as the creator of both Lebanese independence and the principle of communal alliances; (iii) in the mid-nineteenth century, a third strand appeared in the mountain ideology - that of "populism". Implicit in this populism was certain distrust of the city.

Against the ideology of the mountain stood the ideology of the city. The urban state-idea of Lebanon was one of a plural society in which communities co-existed within a common framework. This idea began to emerge in the second half of the nineteenth century, partly as a reaction to the civil war of 1860, but basically as the expression of the interests of a commercial city.<sup>11</sup>

The period of the Mutesarrifate was characterized by two important features which later became crucial elements in the evolving relations among all the ethnic communities of Lebanon. The first was the struggle of the "Lebanese" against the Ottoman Empire for autonomous status, and especially the struggle against the Young Turks, who emphasized their "Turkishness".<sup>12</sup> Salibi<sup>13</sup> pointed to Moslem ideologists who also wanted an independent Lebanon and to the anti-Ottoman attitude which developed after the Young Turks took over.

The second feature which became a cornerstone in the Lebanese polity is the alliance between the political elites (the Zaims or Zuama) of the various ethnic communities.<sup>14</sup> This elite was composed of feudal lords,



Fig.1: Autonomous Mount Lebanon and the Present Boundaries of Lebanon



populist politicians and traders, or "Oligarchs".<sup>15</sup> The broadening agreement between political elites was the political mechanism with which the different opinions could be settled and rewards and benefits divided among supporters. This mechanism was strengthened during the French Mandatory period in Lebanon.

During the French Mandate, the economy flourished and a prosperous middle class, composed of both Moslem and Christians, evolved.<sup>16</sup> This new middle class was one of the most important supporters of the political arrangements between the Maronites and the Sunni Zuama. However, the Maronite sense of separate nationhood was refined, and reached its peak in this period. The Maronite idea of Lebanon was (and still is) of a separate, Mediterranean, classical civilization, on the model of the Phoenicians.<sup>17</sup> For them, Lebanon is hellenized and westernized and, more significantly, not Islamic and Arabist.<sup>18</sup>

It is important to note that a similar idea was nourished by Antun Sa'adeh, the founder of the Syrian Social National Party. The Party advocated the unification of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, and Kuwait as a "Syrian Nation" and the separation of religion from state. It campaigned for the abolition of all sectarian and class differentiation as a prelude to Syrian national identity.<sup>19</sup> Typical of this period of nation-building was that the Maronites nourished and sustained the myth in which they identified themselves as the "heirs of Phoenicia". Although historians agree that there is no foundation for this notion, Phoenicia provided the Lebanese Christians with a pre-Islamic and non-Arab culture, therefore providing an appropriate image for a future Christian-dominated Lebanon.<sup>20</sup>

The Moslems of Lebanon took a different course of development. The Moslems, especially the Sunni Moslems, identified with the Arab Moslem world. Most historians believe that the Moslem population of Lebanon had always wanted to be integrated into Syria or, at least, that the Moslem areas would be integrated into Syria.<sup>21</sup> Influenced by Emir Faisal in Damascus and by the Pan-Arabist movement, the Moslems of Lebanon, especially the Sunnis, dreamed of a "United Syria" and found themselves in opposition to the Maronites who actively advocated the expansion of the Lebanese territory from "Little Lebanon" to a "Greater Lebanon".<sup>22</sup> The Greater Lebanon established by the French in 1920, included the coastal plain (Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre) and the Beqaa Valley (Fig. 1). The Maronite Christians, who wanted access to the sea and room for expansion, praised the decision. But the other Christians and Moslem communities opposed the French territorial consolidation. The Sunni Moslems identified with Greater Syria. The Shiite Moslems and the Druze, as well as the Christian Greek Orthodox and Armenians, resented the insignificant position accorded to them under the emerging political system and the primary position of the Maronites in this new order.

This was the background for the polity and political structure which evolved in the 1920s and to the written constitution of 1926. The constitution established, for the first time, a political compromise among the various "state-ideas" of Lebanon. It was written largely by Michel Chicha, whose ideal was that of a pluralist, non-sectarian state. He acknowledged Lebanon's need to be open to the world around it, its position between Arab and European worlds, a tension which can only be resolved in a concept which can include them both.<sup>24</sup> The constitution provided equal representation for all communities, but did not specify the proportions among the various communities nor which government positions would be

allocated to each community.

The Sunni Moslems refused to participate in the new institutions which were established by the 1926 constitution. Their nationalist and anti-Western attitudes increased in the 1920s, especially after the 1925-7 revolt in Syria.<sup>25</sup> A change in attitude took place among the Shiites of Lebanon who concluded that their future would be better in an independent Lebanese entity than in any Greater Syria. The Druze are pragmatic and would agree to any arrangement which would secure their community interests. The Armenians held a similar attitude to that of the Shiites.

The National Pact, an oral agreement established between the Maronite leader, Bishara Al Khuri and the moderate Sunni Prime Minister, Riad Al Sulh, was extremely important for the future of Lebanon. The elements missing from the 1926 constitution were defined and specified in the National Pact of 1943, which made specific provisions for the various communities in Lebanon. The President was to be a Maronite Christian, the Prime Minister a Sunni Moslem, and the Chamber of Deputies (the Parliament) was to be nominated from six Christians for every five Moslem seats. It was also stated in the Pact that the positions of the Army Commander and the head of the Sûreté Générale (secret service) would be filled by Maronites.<sup>26</sup>

The National Pact stipulated that Lebanon should be completely independent, sovereign and neutral, that Christians should not seek Western protection, and that Moslems should not try to make Lebanon part of a large Arab Islamic state. Lebanon should have an "Arab face", while retaining a separate identity. It would cooperate with the Arab states, especially Syria, providing that they recognized her boundaries.<sup>27</sup> The political compromise of the National Pact called for "Neither Orient nor Occident" but, as George Naccache commented:<sup>28</sup> "two negations don't make a nation, because the two basic orientations of most of the Christians and most Moslems contradicted each other." The Moslems accepted the Maronite notion of a separate Lebanese idea, but the Maronites had to accede to the Moslem demand that Lebanon would have an Arab face and an Arab affinity. The National Pact enabled the Christians and Moslems to unify once again (as in their former unification against the Ottoman Empire) against a common foe - the French Mandatory government - in their struggle for an independent state.<sup>29</sup>

In 1946, the struggle succeeded and Lebanon was proclaimed an independent state. Many observers of Lebanese history have concluded that the Lebanese state idea was "thin" and that Lebanon was never able to overcome the cleavage between the Lebanese who identify with the Arab world and those who identify with the west.<sup>30</sup> The Lebanese failed to build a nation-state. The loyalty of the Lebanese is first a loyalty to their clan and to their ethnic community.<sup>31</sup>

There are two routes in the history of the political development of the national state. One, expressed by Renan,<sup>32</sup> stresses emphatically that the nation is the historical product of state formation, the other stresses that the nation developed before the state and is based on the German idea of the nation, as formulated by Herder and Fichte. Sati al Husri, an Arab nationalist writer who had a great influence on the evolution of Arab nationalism, adopted the German tradition in his writings on the Arab nation.

In the Middle East and many developing countries, the evolution followed Renan's route of development. First, the states were established, often with artificial boundaries drawn in the capital cities of the colonial powers. Some of these artificially-made states were successful in the development of a "nationhood" or a loyalty of the citizens to the state. The Lebanese, however, do not define themselves as "Lebanese" but as "Armenian", "Sunni", "Beiruti", or "Druze". Perhaps no national identity can evolve in what Gordon<sup>33</sup> called a "marginal nation". Lebanon, according to Gordon, is marginal to the surrounding hinterland, but it is also a community of marginals. Marginalism refers to the situation or condition of a person or a group living within a society with which the individual or the group feels only partial identification, while nourished and sustained by a culture that differs from that of the majority.

The Lebanese liberal political system worked as long as it was not seriously challenged by an ideology or by external aggression as in the 1958 crisis or the 1975/6 civil war.<sup>34</sup>

Because of the deeply-rooted communalism of Lebanese society, it is not an integrated civil society in the modern sense.<sup>35</sup> Lebanon was then, and is now, a political entity lacking central cultural values. Thus, central cultural values are replaced by poly-communal values - sectarian values.<sup>36</sup> Lebanon as a "state" preceded Lebanon as a nation but, unlike other new states, Lebanon failed to develop a commonly accepted identity. This lack of common cultural values and a viable state-idea was the foundation for the final collapse of the state.

# NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

- 1 Johnston, 1982, 61
- 2 Salibi, 1965, 40-52; Hudson, 1968, 105-21
- 3 Morrill, 1983, 69-79
- 4 Knight, 1972, 520
- 5 Williams, 1982, 6-10
- 6 Doherty, 1982, 241
- 7 Cuneo, 1978, 132-56; Hechter, 1975, 82-151; Orridge, 1981, 1-15
- 8 Salibi, 1965, 40-52; Hitti, 1957, 20-123
- 9 Salibi, 1965, 106-19; Hudson, 1968, 36-46
- 10 Hourani, 1976, 33-41
- 11 Hourani, 1976, 33-41; Stork, 1983, 6
- 12 Kelidar, 1976, 1-10; Salibi, 1965, 155
- 13 Salibi, 1976, 155-56
- 14 Hudson, 1968, 125-167, Kelidar, 1976, 1-19; Koury, 1976, 8-10
- 15 Khalidi, 1979, 2-25; Hudson, 1968, 36-46
- 16 Owen, 1976, 23-32
- 17 Hourani, 1976, 33-41
- 18 Khalaf, 1976, 43-57
- 19 Smith, 1974, 169, Deeb, 1980, 67
- 20 Gordon, 1980, 23; Porat, 1983, 124-26
- 21 Ben Dor, 1982, 35-40
- 22 Salibi, 1976, 118-19
- 23 Rabinovich, 1984, 38
- 24 Hourani, 1976, 33-41
- 25 Hudson, 1968, 40-46
- 26 Kelidar, 1976, 8-10; Hudson, 1968, 46-53
- 27 Gordon, 1980, 143-45
- 28 Naccache is quoted in Gordon, 1980, 149
- 29 Hudson, 1968, 40-42
- 30 Salem, 1979, 448; Koury, 1976, 8
- 31 Barakat, 1979, 4-8
- 32 Tibi, 1971, 116-128
- 33 Gordon, 1980, 17
- 34 Salem, 1979, 447-48
- 35 Shils, 1966, 1-5
- 36 Koury, 1976, 8; Randal, 1983, 33

## 2. THE DISMEMBERMENT OF THE LEBANESE STATE - THE COLLAPSE OF THE POLITY

The country's political institutions were established on the weak, segmented *raison d'être* of Lebanon. The sectarian schism was introduced into all the political institutions of Lebanon and the frequent crises in the polity showed that the system was not able to balance the various interests. The weakness of the polity is reflected in both the legislature and the executive.

### Schism within the Lebanese Legislature

Confessional schism is built into the parliamentary system of Lebanon. Seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the Lebanese Parliament, are allotted primarily in accordance with religious affiliation: six seats for the Christians for every five seats for the Moslems and Druze. This distribution of parliamentary seats is based on the last census taken in Lebanon in 1932. Since that time, major changes have taken place in Lebanese population characteristics. According to some estimates, the Christian communities of Lebanon now comprise 38 per cent of the population (940,000), based on their trends of low fertility and emigration. The Moslems comprise 61 per cent (1,460,000) of the population based on their higher fertility rates and their tendency not to emigrate. The meaning of this is that there is under-representation of Moslems in the Lebanese Parliament, especially of the Shiites, who have become the second largest community in Lebanon - near 700,000.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, despite the large migration streams within the country as a result of the wars, leaving only 17 per cent of the population in the rural areas, the distribution of parliamentary seats has remained unchanged. Had the electoral law been amended to give 17 per cent of the parliamentary seats to the rural areas and 83 per cent to the urban areas, the political structure of Lebanon would have been turned upside down - transferring the power to the urban Moslems.<sup>2</sup>

The National Pact, which prevented the Chamber of Deputies from being a forum for a real exchange of ideas, also prevented the elections from being a real competition among parties. The Chamber cannot institute changes - it can only serve to prevent changes which would alter the present balance of interests among the different sects.<sup>3</sup> The dependence of the deputies upon the President and the Cabinet for distribution of favors, added to the weakness of the Parliament.<sup>4</sup> Finally, it is important to note that the present Parliament has served since 1972, because the parliamentary elections scheduled for 1976 could not be held in that year, so the life of the parliament elected in 1972 was extended in 1976 and in 1980, and in 1984.<sup>5</sup>

These features of the Lebanese political system have led spectators such as Randal<sup>6</sup> to conclude that "Lebanon never really was a country - much less a Parliamentary Democracy."

### Schism within the Executive

The same sectarian cleavages are present in the executive. Most important is the tension between the Presidency - a position held according to the National Pact by a Maronite Christian - and the Premiership - held by a Sunni Moslem. Some presidents have deliberately weakened the position



TABLE 1: POPULATION BREAKDOWN ACCORDING TO SECTARIAN COMPOSTION,  
IN SELECTED YEARS

Year Community	1920		1932		1956		1983	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
Maronite	279,618	34.7	226,378	28.5	423,708	30.2	530,000	19.6
Greek Orthodox	147,095	18.3	76,522	9.6	148,927	10.6	185,000	6.8
Greek Catholic	60,277	7.5	45,999	5.8	90,788	6.5	115,000	4.3
Armenians	544	0.1	31,156	3.9	78,310	5.6	70,000	2.6
Others (including Jews)	10,799	1.3	30,191	3.8	37,967	2.7	80,000	3.0
Sunni	160,683	19.9	175,925	22.2	286,238	20.4	885,000	32.8
Shiites	96,521	12.0	154,208	19.4	250,655	17.8	656,000	24.3
Druze	50,023	6.2	53,047	6.7	88,131	6.3	180,000	6.7
TOTAL	805,570	100.0	793,426	100.0	1,404,724	100.0	2,701,000	100.0

Sources: For 1920, Kewenig 1956, 58; for 1932 E. De Vaumas 1955; for 1956 Al-Nahar 26.4.1956;  
for 1983, Soffer, 1985.

of the Premiership and some strong ministers have weakened the Presidency. Wars and violence in which the Presidents of Lebanon were actually involved reduced the position of the President even more. President Chamoun had to call for American assistance in order to defend himself from Moslem rebels; President Franjieh had to flee the Presidential Palace in Ba'abda during the civil war of 1975-1976 because it was shelled constantly and President-elect Bashir Gemayel was assassinated.

The success of the institutional framework has often depended on the personalities of the leaders. When there was a high degree of cooperation between the Sunni and Maronite establishments, the institutional systems worked smoothly; when personalities collided, the institutional framework failed. Hostility, suspicion, violence and political assassination have characterized the relationships among the leaders of each community. Thus, old feuds between the Franjieh and Gemayel clans, between the Karamehs of Tripoli and the Salams of Beirut won them the nickname "Godfathers" and their behaviour has been described by Shils<sup>7</sup> as the "incivility" of the Zuama.

The falling out among the traditional sectarian leaders is very important. Since the late 1960s there has been a greater intensity in personal estrangement among these oligarchs, hence the weakness of the various governments.

The weakness of the Lebanese regime is reflected in the frequent rise and fall of governments. Between 1943 and 1958 eighteen governments were formed and between 1960 and 1979 there were 23 different governments.<sup>8</sup> An average Lebanese government served for, on average, nine months only. Confessionalism in the government and the public administration paralyzed the day-to-day activity of the Lebanese government. Article 95 of the constitution made provisions for all sects to be equally represented in public employment and in the composition of any Ministry. But, in reality, there is over-representation in the public administration of two major communities, the Maronites and Sunnis, and a gross underrepresentation of the Shiites.<sup>9</sup> Ministers are regarded by many as representing a religious community rather than as persons responsible for the specialized activities falling within the authority of their offices. Confessionalism conflicts with formal administrative goals, the merit system and procedural efficiency.

There have been no coherent programs for Lebanese governments because there has been no national consensus. The most conspicuous principle governing executive decisions is that of static equilibrium. It is in the nature of the executive to avoid decisions that are political in the full sense. The only effort by the government since independence to impose policy precipitated a civil war. The weakness of the central government was revealed in the 1958 war, when the local Zuama held greater control of their followers than did the central government.

Ghassan Tuelini, the editor of Al-Nahar, commented on the Lebanese system as follows<sup>10</sup>: "The government does not exist, and whatever part of it exists, it has no authority and whoever has authority - it is not the government." The total dismemberment of the Lebanese state was exposed during and after the civil war of 1975-76. The major factors leading to war were:

- (i) The issue of territorial sovereignty and the de-facto partition of the state between various communities.



(ii) The second issue was the demand for political reform and major changes in the representation of the Moslem Communities.

(iii) The third major issue was the sectarian issue.

(iv) The fourth major issue was the pyramidal social class structure characterized by great gaps between the deprived and the privileged.<sup>11</sup>

The total dismemberment of the Lebanese state was reflected by the following characteristics. First, a long process of growth and prosperity of a "black economy" reached new peaks. The widespread evasion of taxation by businesses, professionals and others reached a new stage when non-governmental bodies such as sectarian militias in the service of their sectarian quasi-states began to collect taxes and customs for their own needs. Smuggling and trade in drugs became the most important economic activities in which all the militias and the Syrian army were engaged.<sup>12</sup> The black economy of Lebanon may involve 100,000 jobs, and have an annual value of more than 3 billion dollars.

Secondly, the government stopped providing services and administrative functions. The lack of government authority was expressed by its inability to collect data or conduct a census even at institutions such as private schools.<sup>13</sup> Most important, the government failed in the enforcement of law and order. The police were ineffective, outlaws were protected by political leaders and there was a settlement of feuds and conflicts outside the courts, without interference of central authorities. During the 1975-6 civil war, government bureaus, police stations, army barracks, and courts were occupied or ransacked by the fighting bands. Their equipment and archives were commandeered or burned. Prisons and even mental hospitals were broken into and their inmates released.<sup>14</sup>

Third, and most important, the Lebanese state failed in its most important role, the provision of basic security to its citizens. A careful examination of the role and development of the Lebanese army points to a deliberate effort to keep the army small and ineffective and, as a result, the Lebanese government surrendered its monopoly over organized violence and was replaced by military wings of other political organizations.

The first reflection of the army's weakness was revealed in the 1958 war, when Chihab, the Commander of the army refused to obey President Chamoun's order to pit the army against the predominantly Moslem rebels. During the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the Lebanese army and the security forces were too weak to prevent the growth and development of various sectarian militias. The greatest failure of the army was its inability to prevent Palestinian terror attacks on Israel.

Even before the civil war of 1975-6, the Moslem Leftist National Movement considered the army as a "Maronite army" and as acting on behalf of Maronite big business.<sup>15</sup> In reality, the Moslems had a slight edge over the Christians among the rank and file of the Lebanese army (53 per cent to 47 per cent) but the composition of the officer class was 65:35 per cent in favor of the Christians; even though 18 of the 37 top posts were in Moslem hands.<sup>16</sup> During 1975-6 the army disintegrated completely along confessional lines and the soldiers trained their respective sectarian militias. Army barracks, arms and ammunition were transferred to the hands of the fighting camps.<sup>17</sup> Between 1976 and 1984, all efforts to rebuild the army as a strong body failed. During 1983 and 1984, the new Lebanese Army, trained and equipped by the Americans, failed and disintegrated in its war

against Druze and Shilte militias in and around Beirut.<sup>18</sup> Some Lebanese army units defected while others abandoned their positions in the fighting.

The Lebanese believed that, if they kept their army deliberately small (not more than 10,000 soldiers in 1956/7) and under-armed, the army would not endanger the regime. To their misfortune, the Lebanese found out that, when they surrendered their power, other powerful organizations such as sectarian militias and foreign occupying forces took their place and enforced law and order. All efforts to reconstruct the army were unsuccessful. The army could not be restored without a consensus; this required a political normalization which could not proceed in the absence of an effective and credible state-system, which needed the backing of an apolitical, militarily effective army.

Finally, it should be noted that the civil wars of 1958 and 1975-6 were accompanied by demands for major political reforms in the Lebanese regime in order to repair basic distortions. The Moslem communities, especially the Shiites and Druze, demanded representation in parliament according to their proportion in the population. The Moslems also demanded that more political posts be allotted to the Moslem communities, and that the position of the Prime Minister be strengthened. None of these demands was met and the government of Amin Gemayel and his premier Karameh are functioning at present within the old framework - which explains the instability of the regime, its weakness and its inability to regain sovereignty.

#### The Surrender of Lebanese Sovereignty: Major Decisions

There are four or five major steps and decisions which might be seen as very significant in the process of dismemberment of the state. The first is President Chamoun's invitation of American intervention in the civil crisis of Lebanon and the non-intervention policy of the army. The second is the Cairo Agreement, signed in 1969 by the Lebanese government, the Palestinians and other Arab states. According to this Agreement, Lebanon agreed that the Palestinian guerrillas would be allowed to exercise certain extra-territorial rights in the fifteen refugee camps in Lebanon and they would be given free access to the Israeli border in the Southern Arqoub region. From this year on, the Lebanese army deserted its posts in the south, and the Palestinian "proto-state" evolved. The south became a battle-ground between Israel and the Palestinians, the Lebanese state had not acted as a sovereign state in this region for almost fifteen years. The Malkart Agreement which was signed by the Lebanese Government and the Palestinians in 1973 confirmed the Cairo Agreement.

Third, between 1970 and 1975, a series of non-decisions eroded Lebanese sovereignty even more. It allowed the unloading of arms for the Maronite militia in Jounieh and permitted the establishment of the various community militias.

Fourth, Lebanon welcomed the Syrian Army, which entered the country in 1976 in order to end the civil war. In the Riyadh Summit Meeting, which followed the civil war, Lebanon admitted its weakness by consenting to the development of an Arab Deterrent Force of around 30,000 men, as a peace-keeping force.<sup>19</sup> Lebanon admitted its ineffectiveness over the control of its territory and people. The 1975-6 war had turned the state into an almost empty shell or, as Stork<sup>20</sup> defined Lebanon, as a "regime in search of a state, a state in search of a social base".

The authority of Lebanon's President, government, parliament and

central bureaucracy was limited to a small area near Beirut. Lebanon's territory was in fact divided among external forces and local baronies.

Notes to Chapter Two

- 1 Soffer, 1985
- 2 Toubi, 1980, 96-7
- 3 Shils, 1966, 1-12
- 4 Kerr, 1966, 202
- 5 Rabinovich, 1984, 58
- 6 Randal, 1983
- 7 Zamir, 1982, 7-15; Shils, 1966, 2
- 8 Muir, 1983, 14-18; Bustros, 1982, 91-131
- 9 Crow, 1966, 169
- 10 Al-Nahar, September 7, 1968
- 11 Rabinovich, 1984, 44-5; Deeb, 1980, 140-1; Gordon, 1980, 136-9
- 12 Stork, 1983, 13; Kanovsky, 1983, 13-23; Randal, 1983, 99-100
- 13 Barakat, 1979, 13
- 14 Khalidi, 1979, 104-5; Salibi, 1976, 73; Ben Dor, 1982, 35-44
- 15 Deeb, 1980, 44
- 16 Khalidi, 1979, 67-8
- 17 Deeb, 1980, 141; Kelidar, 1976, 8-11; Khalidi, 1979, 43; Salibi 1976, 57
- 18 Muir, 1984, 2-4; Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol 30, 1984, 32645
- 19 Deeb, 1980, 18
- 20 Stork, 1983, 12

### 3. THE DISMEMBERMENT OF LEBANON: THE PROTO-STATES AND TERRITORIAL ENTITIES OF LEBANON

As a result of the centrifugal forces discussed in Chapter two, and as an outcome of the civil war of 1975-6 and the Israeli and Syrian occupation, Lebanon is today divided into five territorial entities: The Christians, Druze and Shiite entities and the Israeli- and Syrian- occupied territories. A sixth territorial entity, the Palestinian state in the south, was destroyed by Israel in 1982. The Palestinian proto-state will be described, together with the other territorial entities, because its evolution and existence reflect very clearly the weakness of the Lebanese government and the surrender of its sovereignty over Southern Lebanon.

#### Beirut - A Partitioned Capital to a Partitioned State

The partition of Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, symbolizes the schism and divisiveness of Lebanese society. Before the 1975-6 civil war, Beirut comprised a jigsaw of quarters and neighbourhoods, each occupied by a different ethnic community, with some ethnically-mixed middle-class neighbourhoods such as Ras Beirut, and the confessionally mixed industrial districts of Al-Maslakh, Dawra and Zalka.

During the 1975-6 civil war, the population of Beirut migrated to the residential areas of their respective communities outside Beirut. Moreover, people migrated to Beirut from all other parts of Lebanon because there was a balance between the fighting groups in Beirut but nowhere else.<sup>1</sup>

During and immediately after the war, each of the fighting parties made efforts to control the quarters and neighbourhoods of its respective community. The most successful territorial consolidation was carried out by the Maronites of East Beirut. The first targets for the Maronite militia were the two slum neighbourhoods of Al-Karantina and Al-Maslakh, which were inhabited by poor Shiite, Sunni and Syrian workers. The two neighbourhoods controlled the main entrance to Christian Beirut from the Christian north and could easily be blocked by the Moslem opposition (Fig 2A). The Christians saw the two neighbourhoods as dangerously close to the vital port area of Beirut, which the Maronite militia, the Phalangists, were determined to keep under their control, and Al-Karantina was located a short distance from the Maronite Party's - the Kataeib's - headquarters in Ashrafiyya.<sup>2</sup> In the beginning of 1976, the Christians conquered Al-Karantina and Al-Maslakh and, in order to secure the road to the north, overran the Palestinian refugee camp of Dbaiyeh, near the Dog River.

The second stage in the Christian territorial consolidation was the occupation and destruction of Moslem enclaves within the Christian-held territories; the Palestinian camps of Tal al-Zaa'tar and Jisr al-Pasha (Fig 2A). By the summer of 1976, all of East Beirut, including the Palestinian camps and the Shiite slum of Al-Nabaa, had been occupied by Maronite forces.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, Christians in other parts of Beirut left or were forced to leave neighbourhoods such as Ras Beirut, Furn al-Shabbah and Al-Hazimiyyah, which were blocked by Palestinian and Shiite fighters. The Moslem population which had been evicted from Al-Karantina, Al-Maslakh, Al-Nabaa and Tal al-Zaa'tar, occupied vacant apartments and even hotels in West Beirut, mostly evacuated by their Christian inhabitants and

Fig.2A: Beirut before the Civil War of 1975-6

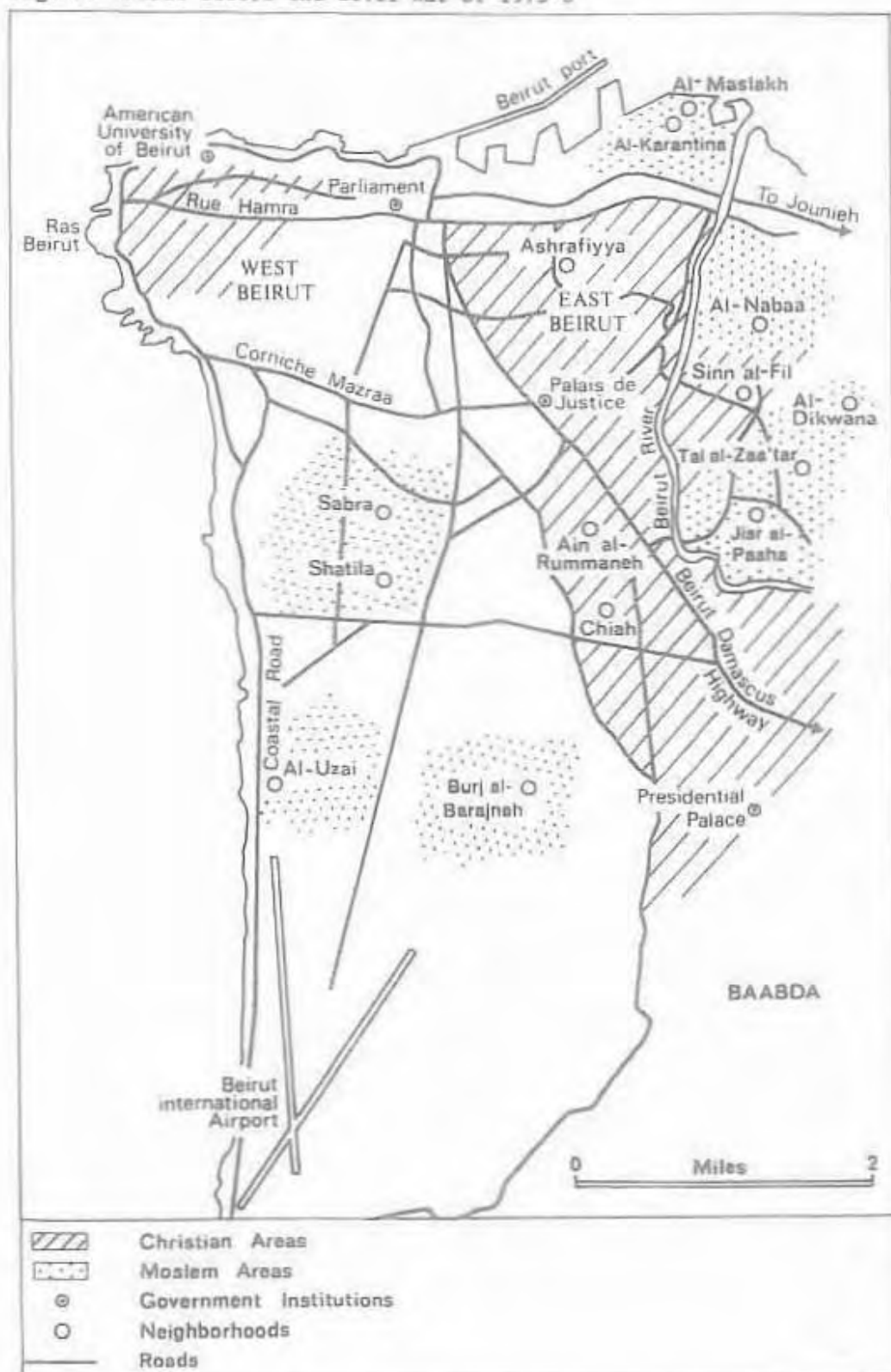
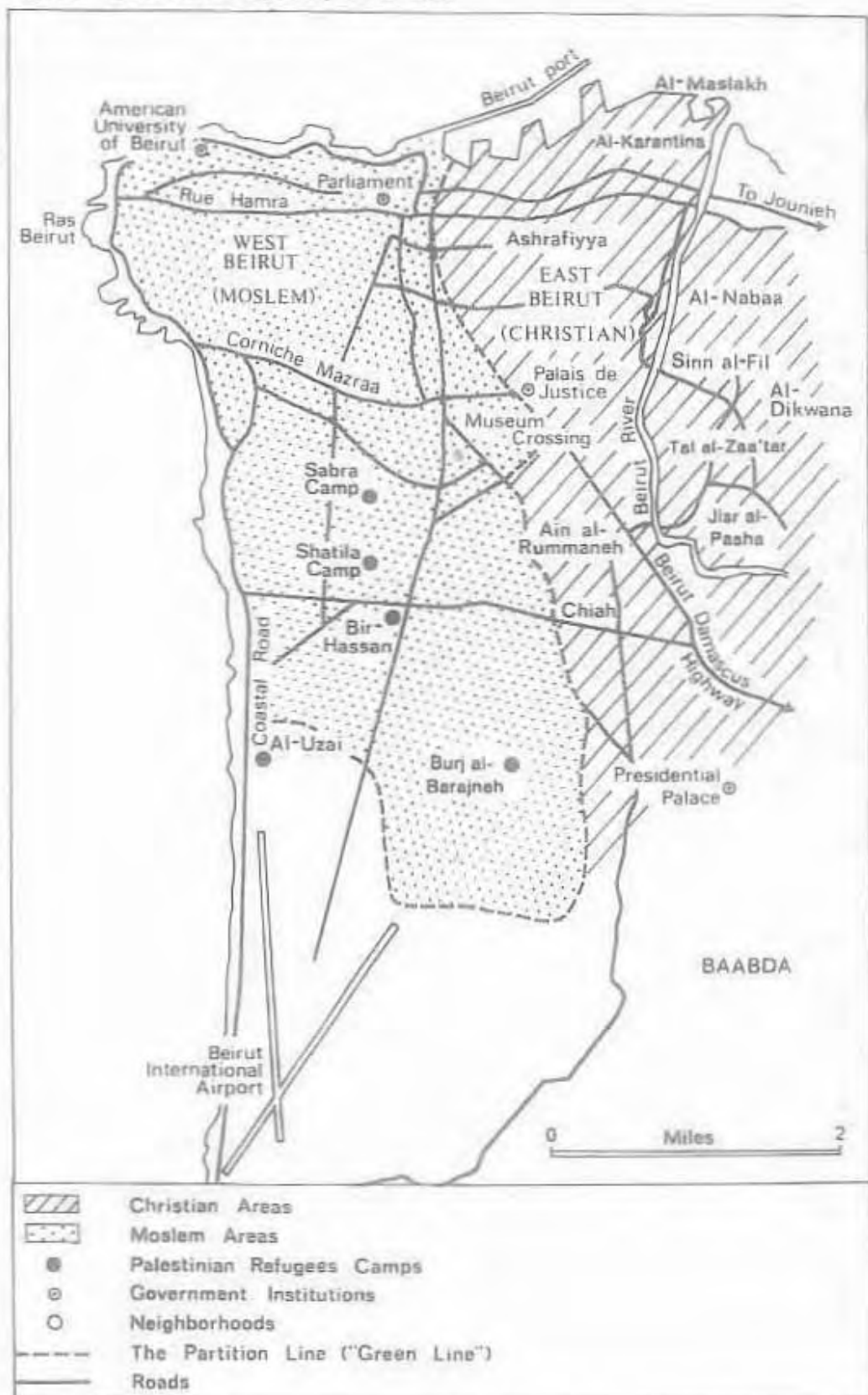




Fig.2B: Partitioned Beirut, 1976-1985



The Christian proto-state, nicknamed "Maronistan" or the "Republic of Jounieh" is the most organized quasi-state in Lebanon. The territorial base of the Christian state is Mount Lebanon - specifically the counties of Al-Matn, Kharak, Batrioun and Christian East Beirut. The area of the Christian proto-state is approximately 400 sq. miles and it has a population of approximately 400,000 people (without Beirut) (Fig. 2B). Within the Christian state there are also small groups of Druze and Shiite minorities. It is important to note which territory is not included in the Christian proto-state: the county of Jezzine (completely detached from the Christian proto-state) and the Alei and Shouf counties. The Shouf area and parts of Alei counties are areas of "uncertainty" - here the Maronites compete with the Druze over hegemony; at the end of 1984, Druze supremacy was clearcut and thousands of Maronites had been expelled from the mountain between 1975 and 1984. Whereas Maronite strategy to preserve their

#### The Christian Proto-State

the city. embassies had to evacuate it because of the continuous terror activities in occupied twice by Syrian and Israeli forces and most of the foreign able to impose Lebanese sovereignty even on West Beirut. The city was not permit government action even on a day-to-day basis; the army was not President formally governs Lebanon from Baabda. The fighting parties did Beirut no longer functions as the capital of Lebanon though the the Shouf, the Shiite territories of the South and the city. and there is territorial continuity between the Druze-held territories in Today, West and South Beirut are the bastions of the Shiite militia, Amal, Beirut. Only the port of Beirut returned to Lebanese sovereignty in 1983. was defeated by the Shiite and Druze militias and was expelled from West By the end of 1984, after the Lebanese army was deployed in West Beirut, it Lebanese government failed in its efforts to regain control over the city. destroyed and the Palestinian militia evacuated from Beirut. However, the forces occupied Beirut until the Palestinian infrastructure had been Lebanon in its efforts to destroy the Palestinian proto-state, and Israeli this Palestinian state were located in West Beirut. In 1982 Israel invaded detail, below, p. 00) and the headquarters and administrative machine of West Beirut became the capital of the Palestinian proto-state (see in of the fighting. Palace was shelled by Moslem militias and the airport often closed because Christian MfE refused to enter the Moslem-held territory. The Presidential Lebanese government. The Parliament was located in Moslem West Beirut and points were frequently closed. The fire paralyzed the functioning of the two sectors was severely restricted by sniper fire from both sides and the East and West Beirut. The use of the five main crossing points between the fighting frequently broke out between Christians, Palestinians and Shites, Syrian army, which occupied Beirut in 1976. During the years 1976-1982, go to the Christian sector of the city. Law and order was enforced by the communication had become difficult. Moslems (Sunni and Shiite) refused to East and a predominantly Moslem sector to the West, between which regular two separate and distinct residential sectors - a Christian sector to the The city had lost its unity as an urban complex. It now consisted of completely demoralized. Thus, Beirut emerged from the civil war heavily gutted and



dominant position in the Shouf failed, they did succeed in their efforts to secure free access from Beirut to their Maronite heartland. Beirut gave free access to the sea and supply from foreign sources. It is interesting to note that, in 1958, during the first Lebanese civil war, the Maronites also defended East Beirut and the port, just as they did later, in 1975-6. The militia of the Kataeib (Phalange) with the assistance of the militia of the Armenian party, Tashnaq, kept the road north of Beirut open to the mountain area. The major strategic lesson of 1958 was that the heartland territories should be developed in Jounieh, Jubail and Batroun (Fig 3). The ports were specifically included in the public works program of the Kataeib party, and the party kept its members in all the strategic locations such as checkpoints and bridges leading from Beirut to the mountain areas.<sup>4</sup>

The *raison d'être* of the Christian state is based on its separate identity as a Christian minority and on the fear, strengthened during the 1975-6 civil war, that not only is their political status as the "creators of modern Lebanon" endangered, but so, too, is their physical safety, hence their concentrated efforts to establish for themselves a defensible enclave in Mount Lebanon.

For many years, the Christian Maronites held the view that Lebanon was an independent, separate, sovereign complete entity. Lebanon was a national home for the Christians.<sup>5</sup> In reality, the Maronites were loyal to their community, to their church, to France, and to the Vatican.<sup>6</sup> Their loyalty to the state was threatened and shaken during the civil war of 1975-6 and since that time their efforts and resources have been dedicated to organizing and administering their separate entity.

The organization and consolidation of the Christian proto-state is mainly the achievement of one party, the Kataeib (Phalange). The Phalange party, which was established in 1936, was mostly a Maronite party which expressed the Maronite *raison d'être*.

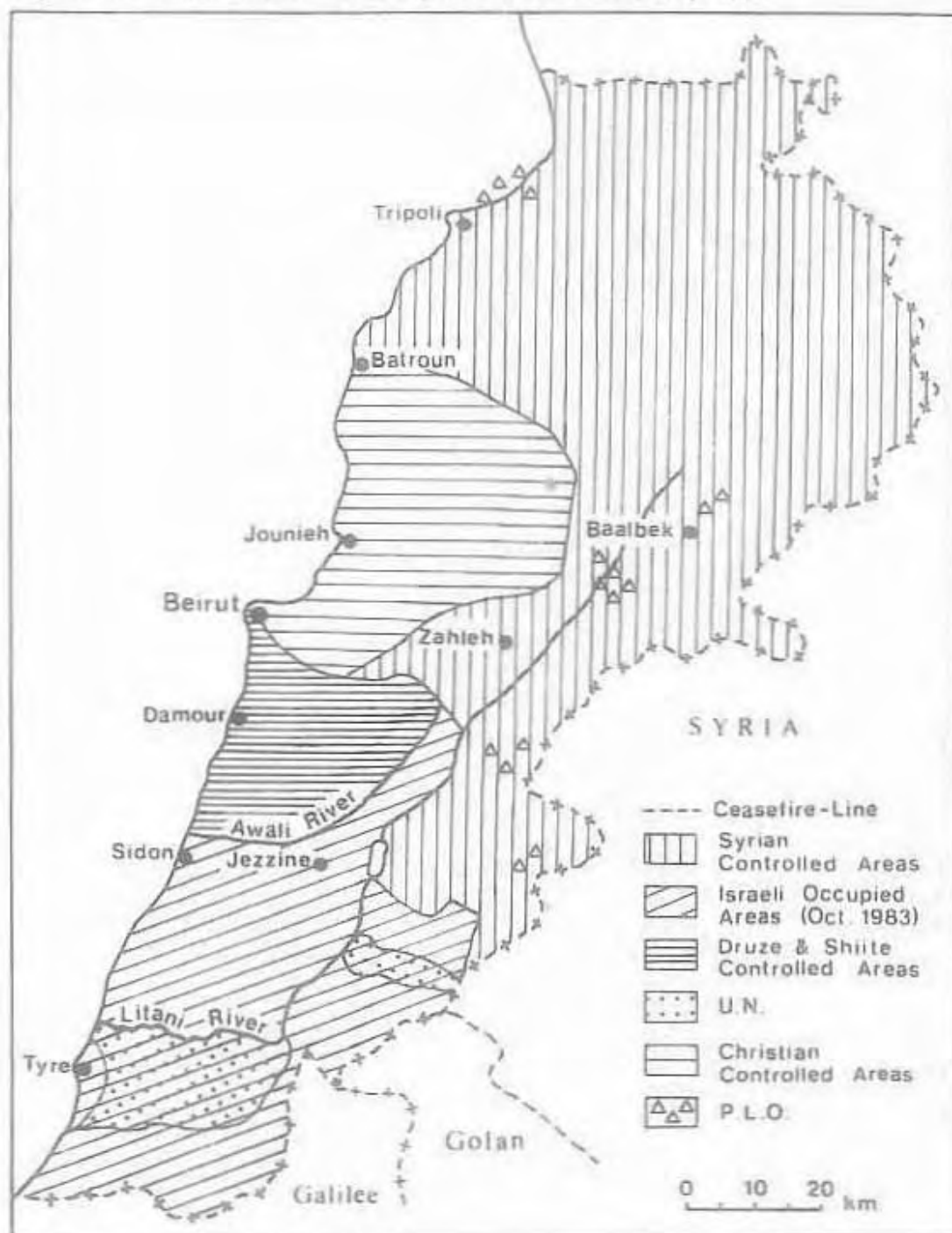
During the 1970's, the party's militia was organized as a strong force which could defend the Christians of East Beirut and other Christians in their clashes with the Palestinians and Moslem militias.

During the civil war, the foundations of a Christian proto-state were laid. First, popular defence committees sprang up in Beirut and other parts of the country to provide the necessary administrative functions which were no longer provided by the central government.<sup>7</sup> In addition to defence, these people's committees organized the supply of food, health, education and other services.

After the conclusion of the war (1976), while the Lebanese central government was slow, hesitant or reluctant to resume its power and sovereignty, civilian commissions for economic matters, education, health, justice, information and even foreign relations were developed in the Maronite-controlled areas.<sup>8</sup>

Most important was the development of a quasi-state infrastructure. The port of Jounieh served as the major port of the Christian proto-state in the early stages of the civil war and the arms supply for the Christian forces came through this port. In addition to this port, the Phalangists controlled and operated "Dock Five" in the Beirut port from the time of the 1975-6 civil war up to 1983. The port provided the Maronites with their main source of income in the form of customs revenues amounting to the equivalent of \$5,000,000 per month.<sup>9</sup> Only in the spring of 1983 was the Lebanese army allowed to take over the port. As a result, the sovereignty of the Lebanese state over the major port of the country was resumed. The

Fig.3: The Proto-States and Occupied Areas in Lebanon, 1985



Christian state had also operated ports in Batroun and Jubail and a small airport near Jounieh.

A separate telecommunications system connecting the Christian proto-state to Cyprus also developed during 1977, as did a mail service, serving the Christian territory specifically.<sup>10</sup> In addition to health, education and garbage collection, the Phalangists organized a tax collection system, a police force and courts. These latter functions performed by the Christian proto-state for its "citizens", show more than anything else that the Lebanese central government had no authority over the Christian territories. The Maronites also operated their own radio and television stations, "The Voice of Lebanon" and had their own newspapers and news agency.<sup>11</sup>

The most important governing apparatus of the Christian proto-state is its military force. This military force was expanded from 10,000-15,000 fighters during the civil war and immediately after it to almost 80,000 fighters during the early 1980s, according to one source.<sup>12</sup> In 1980, a "National Guard" was formed from all the Christian militias and unified under the Phalangists. Its responsibility was defined as "security within the Christian areas". Bashir Gemayel, the leader of the Phalangist militia, declared that the Lebanese army would not be allowed into the Christian areas. After his assassination, his brother, Amin was elected as President. He has tried to reduce the power of the Phalangist militia and to introduce the Lebanese army into Christian territories, but there is little evidence that he has been successful in this effort. On the eve of 1985, the Christian quasi-state was still holding its own. Government agencies and the Army were not permitted to enter it and the Lebanese state had no authority in this area.

#### The Druze Proto-State

There are approximately 150,000 to 200,000 Druze in Lebanon and they are concentrated in two areas: Hasbaya-Rashaya in the Beqaa and the Shouf and Aley and Upper Matn area (Fig 3). The Shouf has a mixed Druze-Maronite population. The history of the contact between the two communities is one of rivalry, conflict and war since the mid-nineteenth century. During the civil war of 1975-6, most of the Druze, led by Kemal Jumblatt and his Progressive Socialist Party, fought side by side with the Palestinians and National Movement.

Perhaps the first step toward the establishment of a separate Druze entity was taken in 1976, when Kemal Jumblatt announced the establishment of an ad hoc administration throughout the territory held by the National Movement and the Palestinians.<sup>13</sup>

Until 1982, Druze supremacy in the Shouf and Aley was not challenged by the Maronites. But in 1982, when Israel invaded Lebanon and occupied the Shouf, it permitted the Lebanese Forces (the Phalangists) to re-establish themselves in the area. Jumblatt's socialist party and militia, the P.S.P. were driven out of towns such as Souq al-Gharb.<sup>14</sup> When the Israelis withdrew from the Shouf and Aley, the Druze, equipped with Syrian arms, not only bombarded local Christian towns but also Greater Beirut.

The ferocious war over the Shouf resulted in a Druze victory and the defeat of the Phalangists. The Druze forces trapped several thousand Phalangists in Bhamdoun, captured Qabr-Chamoun and surrounded Deir al-Qamar, where over 25,000 Christian refugees found shelter.<sup>15</sup> The Druze campaign brought them into open conflict with the Lebanese army out of the

southern and western parts of Beirut.<sup>16</sup> By 1984, the Druze had gained territorial control over all the Shouf up to the southern entrance to Beirut and the Druze territory reached the Shiite-controlled areas in the south, thus allowing them an untrammelled supply line with their allies, the Shiites. The Druze had the advantage of topography on their side and they used their topographical superiority to defeat the Lebanese Army. Extremely crucial in the Druze plan was the capture of Damour, which provided a long-desired access to the sea.<sup>17</sup> There were reports that Israel warned the Druze forces not to advance further south than Damour.<sup>18</sup> There was also an "understanding" between the Israelis and the Druze that the latter would prevent a Palestinian presence in the territories which they held. The Druze, being a minority group, have always been very cautious not to antagonize the majority in their countries of residence - Syria, Lebanon and Israel. But from 1982 on, they made some steps toward the establishment of an autonomous Druze canton, an act which raised the hostility of the Lebanese Christians. In 1983, the three most respected leaders of the community: Jumblatt, Arslan and the spiritual leader, Abu-Shakra, presented their demands to Gemayel's government. They called for administrative decentralization and the establishment of new governorates, linking the Druze areas in southeast Lebanon, the Shouf, Aley and Upper Matn. Simultaneously, the Druze decided to administer their own areas, to collect taxes, to issue separate stamps, to provide law and order and to set up a radio station, called the "Voice of the Mountain".<sup>19</sup> On October 1, 1983, Jumblatt announced the establishment of a local administration in Druze-controlled areas of the Shouf, which would be responsible for routine government "until the return of central government institutions". The administration would be headed by a "supreme administrative authority" of eight men and would also include a central committee and a general congress. A government spokesman attacked the move as an "attempt to partition Lebanon on a canton basis" - an accusation which had been directed in the past by the Druze against the Maronite proto-state. It is interesting to note that some Israeli Druze called on the Israeli government to support the demands of the Lebanese Druze for the establishment of a Druze salient in Lebanon. Yet other, more extreme, individuals considered the possibility of a separate Druze state that would stretch from the Mediterranean shore across the southern Beqaa and the Golan Heights to the Hauran and the Jebel Druze in southern Syria. Druze from other parts of Lebanon and from Northern Syria could be expected to emigrate to it. The backbone of the new state's economy would be agriculture and its resources could include revenue from Beirut International Airport and a new port to be set up at Jiyeh, south of Beirut.<sup>20</sup> While this can be considered as imaginative speculation, a Druze territorial and political entity is nevertheless coming into being at present. As matters become more routine, as has been the case in the Christian proto-state, it will be extremely difficult to return the Shouf, Aley and the Upper Matn to their former situation.

#### The Shiite Territorial Entity in Lebanon

The number of Shiites in Lebanon is estimated as between 700,000 and 1 million, and they comprise about 30 per cent of the population.<sup>21</sup> Approximately half of the Shiites now live in Beirut with the rest concentrated in the Beqaa and in southern Lebanon. The Shiites are concentrated in a belt of poverty in south and west Beirut and, before the



civil war of 1975-6, also in Al-Nabaa, Al-Karantina and Al-Maslakh (Figs 2A, 2B). The Shiite slums were located near Palestinian refugee camps, which accelerated their radicalization.<sup>22</sup>

During the latter part of the civil war of 1975-6, the Shiite militia fought alongside the Palestinians and the National Movement forces, but proved ineffective, failing in the defense of Al-Nabaa. It achieved its greatest power in the early 1980s. The Amal militia grew from 5,000 to 30,000 and, with Druze artillery support, it forced the army units to withdraw from West Beirut in 1983. Amal expanded its control over the southern suburbs of Beirut and the Lebanese army was driven out of Beirut.<sup>23</sup> The Shiites are located in three main geographical concentrations, and do not have the political cohesion of the Druze or the Maronites. The fact that large Shiite communities are living in Israeli-Syrian- and Lebanese government-controlled areas, makes their present and future political organization difficult. Only in Beirut did Amal, led by Nabih Berry, initiate a policy which could be defined as purely territorial, managing to take full control over south and southeast Beirut.

Amal has developed a very complicated relationship with Israel. Both sides have a common interest in keeping the Palestinian terrorists out of the area. There are signs that Amal is preventing the infiltration of Palestinian guerrilla groups. On the other hand, Amal was leading the struggle against Israeli forces in the south and, since Israel withdrew its forces from South Lebanon, Amal has focused its struggle against the Israeli-supported Southern Lebanon Army, headed in the past by Sa'ad Haddad and today by Antoine Lahad. Amal's behaviour in the south is shaped by the more extremist Shiite Organizations such as the "Jihad al-Islami" and "Hizballah" both under Iranian influence. Both organizations call for a "Jihad" against Israel and were responsible for many of the terror attacks and car-bombs in the south. Amal found itself competing with those two extremist organizations, hence its behaviour in the South and elsewhere in Lebanon tended toward more violent and extreme actions. Basically, Amal is a moderate party and probably, after it establishes complete control over the south, assuming that Israel will reduce its intervention in Southern Lebanon to a minimum, then it may be possible to see an improvement in the relations between Israel and the Shiites of Southern Lebanon because both are destined to exist in close proximity to each other.

In the Beqaa, the Shiites are under Syrian occupation and the influence of the extreme Iranian Shi'ism. As in other parts of Lebanon, the situation in Baalbek, the largest town, is anarchic. The Syrians are in nominal control as elsewhere, but not able to control factional rivalry in the region. The Lebanese army deployed in Baalbek is ineffective and there is organized terror against both pro-Syrian Palestinians and Lebanese extreme Shiites led by Mussawi, the leader of the extreme Jihad al-Islami -- a terrorist group which took responsibility for almost all the car-bomb attacks in recent years. The economy of the Beqaa is based on the production of hashish, which yields some 450-500 million dollars a year -- nowadays the most profitable element in the Lebanese economy.<sup>24</sup>

### The Palestinian Proto-State in Lebanon

150,000 Palestinian refugees arrived in Lebanon in 1948 during and after the first Israeli-Arab war.<sup>25</sup> A second, smaller wave arrived in Lebanon at the beginning of the 1970s, after they were expelled from Jordan. By 1982 their number, according to various estimates, was between 300 and 400 thousand, according to some sources and under 300,000 according to others.<sup>26</sup> The main refugee camps were located in Tripoli, Beirut, Sidon, Tyre and Baalbek. In Beirut and Sidon, the Palestinian refugees fully integrated and thousands of them received Lebanese citizenship.<sup>27</sup> Less than half of the Palestinians lived in the refugee camps in the 1970s.<sup>28</sup> By the mid 1960s, the Palestine Liberation Organization began to organize the Palestinians in the camps into independent Palestinian labour unions and professional associations. Between 1967 and 1969, the PLO had penetrated all the refugee camps and established its military force within the outside camps. The Palestinians were organized in the Arqoub region ("Fatahland") on the foot of Mount Hermon, in order to launch attacks on Israeli settlements in northern Israel (Fig.4).<sup>29</sup> According to the Cairo Agreement of 1969, Lebanon agreed that the Palestinians would be allowed to exercise certain extra-territorial rights in the Palestinian camps and would be given free access to the Israeli border in the Arqoub region.<sup>30</sup>

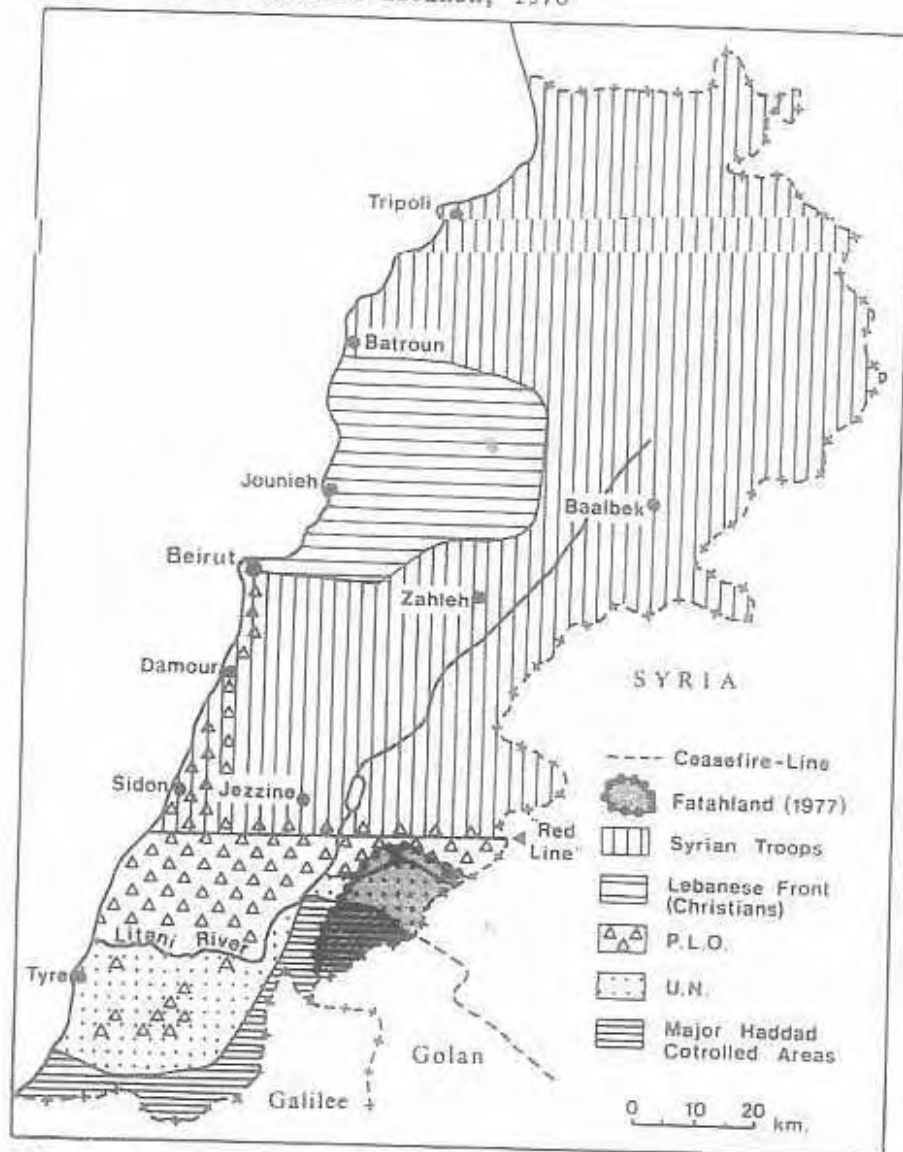
Between 1967 and 1973, the Palestinians launched hundreds of attacks on Israel, which were met with Israeli retaliation. The Lebanese army deserted the southern part of Lebanon and the area became a battleground for Israel and the Palestinians. It was very important for the future role of the Palestinians in Lebanon that, by the early 1970s, they had become the focal point around which Lebanese rejectionists had congregated. The rejectionists included deprived groups and communities, under-privileged sects and ideological parties which had previously been banned in the country.<sup>31</sup> The Palestinians' position in the south became pre-eminent after their active part in the Lebanese civil war of 1975-6. They helped the National Movement to occupy almost all of Lebanon. The Palestinians became the true masters of the area stretching between Tyre - Nabatiyya and Beirut and had strong bases in Sidon.

The Palestinian mini-state was set in the area between the Litani River and Beirut after 1978, when Israel invaded Lebanon in the "Litani Operation" aiming at the removal of all Palestinian bases from the south. U.N. forces (UNIFIL) were deployed in the area, following Israeli withdrawal (see below).

The Palestinian proto-state in Lebanon had all the features of a state: control over people and territory, government-machine and bureaucracy, a legislature and an executive, an army, communications networks and all the symbols characterizing independent states such as a flag, stamps and a head of state. The Lebanese period in the history of the Palestinian national movement was the first truly independent period of Palestinian national history. The Palestinians, oppressed on all sides, evolved from the status of miscellaneous refugees into a considerable proto-state.<sup>32</sup>

During the early 1970s, and to a greater degree after the Lebanese civil war, the Palestinians replaced the Lebanese state militarily and politically. They stood against the Israeli army, and they were the sole provider of services which the Lebanese government failed to provide, such

Fig.4: The Division of Lebanon, 1978



Source: Based on Salam, P. 456

as health and sanitation which were provided to all residents of the south by the Palestinian Red Crescent.<sup>33</sup> Government workers and policemen continued to sit in their offices in Tyre, Sidon and Nabatiyya, but matters for which they were responsible were decided in the PLO headquarters in these towns. The Lebanese courts in the south were replaced by Palestinian courts.

The PLO was able to establish itself as a proto-state in southern Lebanon because of an organizational framework which included all sectors of an embryonic state, including the Palestinian National Council (The Palestinian parliament) and its executive. Under the executive (the Palestinian government) were the Palestinian Planning Centre, the Palestinian Research Centre and the Palestinian Red Crescent -- all located in Beirut and functioning in all Palestinian-controlled areas. The Palestinian governmental framework also included a Supreme Council for education, the Supreme Council for the Occupied Motherland, a Treasury and a Foreign Affairs Department which was responsible for the PLO diplomatic offices all over the world. The Palestinians owned and activated their own radio station, The Voice of Palestine and their news agency, WAFA, which worked from Beirut.

In this organizational framework, the "Samed", a labour federation, in which there were twelve professional associations including farmers, engineers, teachers and lawyers, was very effective. The "Samed" was the most important body for popular recruitment for the Palestinian revolution. The "Samed" established manufacturing plants which employed 6,000 Palestinians, mainly in weaving, carpentry, food and leather industries.

The capital of the Palestinian proto-state was West Beirut, in which the PLO headquarters and all its political and administrative framework were located. The Palestinians took the law into their own hands, establishing a recognized sovereignty over the old-established Moslem sectors of Beirut.<sup>34</sup> The Palestinian army, which had 6,000 fighters at the end of the 1960s, grew into a force of 12,000 to 20,000 fighters after the 1975-6 civil war.<sup>35</sup> It fought well in the Lebanese civil war and was able to defend its capital in Beirut. In the south, the PLO army had constructed an elaborate defence system, well fortified and assisted by an appropriate communications system. The Palestinians had heavy arms, artillery and tanks and were organized as a regular army and not as guerrilla units.

Thus, the PLO in Lebanon, with its external and internal connections, could behave effectively as a state within a state.<sup>36</sup> Gordon<sup>37</sup> quotes a Palestinian friend who told him that it was worthwhile to "sacrifice" Lebanon in the Palestinian struggle because it was a corrupt society. The Palestinian writer, Edward Said,<sup>38</sup> described Palestinian conduct in the civil war and afterwards as an unhealthy thing because Palestinian politics became a function of Lebanese politics.

In June 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon with the declared aim of destroying the Palestinian military power in southern Lebanon. The object of the war, from that perspective, was achieved. The PLO military presence was removed from southern Lebanon and Beirut. The PLO army continued its existence outside Lebanon and parts of it were still in Tripoli, under Syrian control.<sup>39</sup> On the eve of 1985 there was enough evidence that the PLO had returned, in small groups, to the camps near Sidon and in Beirut. Because Israel's original war plan was expanded to include Beirut, Israel was able to destroy not only the military strength of the PLO, but the infrastructure and governmental framework of the Palestinian proto-state as



well. The split within the PLO between pro-Arafat and anti-Arafat factions added to the weakness of the PLO. At the end of 1984 and beginning of 1985, the PLO members were dispersed in Cyprus, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and Yemen and their political re-organization became difficult as a result of this geographical dispersal.

#### Syria in Lebanon

In Arab historical geography, Syria and Lebanon are included in one region, "Bilad al-Sham" (the country of the north), which included an area from the Mediterranean in the west to the Euphrates and Tigris in the east. This area was a separate political entity during the Umayyad Empire (651-750). During and after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the idea of such a "Greater Syria" was revived, especially, between 1918 and 1920, by Feisal Ibn Hussein. But France and Great Britain divided the Ottoman Empire into separate political units: Lebanon, Syria and Palestine.<sup>40</sup> Many Syrians have never viewed Lebanon as anything more than an artificial French colonial construction, carved out of Syrian territory in order to favour the Christians of Lebanon.

Syria's Minister of Foreign Affairs Khaddam and President Assad, have declared that Lebanon was part of Syria before the French mandate and that Lebanon still is part of the Arab nation, led by Syria.<sup>41</sup> The specific Syrian interests in Lebanon are threefold:

(i) The security interest. Lebanon has a long boundary with Syria and the Beirut-Damascus road is one of the easiest military modes of access to Syria. Damascus had a strong motive in maintaining a friendly regime in Beirut and in preventing the formation and activities of Syrian political and military opposition in Beirut.<sup>42</sup> Syria tried to convince Lebanon to be part of the Eastern Front in the various wars between Israel and the Arab states but did not succeed; in the 1967 and 1973 wars, Lebanon did not take an active part.

(ii) Interwoven into the strategic security interests which Syria has in Lebanon are its political interests. These are based on Syria's nationalist ideology, in which Syria and Lebanon are "sister states" -- part of the Arab nation -- one people. Syria has never recognized Lebanon as an independent and sovereign state and the special close relationship between the two countries is symbolized by the lack of formal diplomatic relations.<sup>43</sup> There is a legitimate party in Lebanon which openly advocates the unification of Lebanon and Syria. This party, "Parti Populaire Syrien", has many Christian Greek Orthodox supporters and it is a popular party in the Kura Country in northern Lebanon (around Tripoli), where Syria has many supporters. But the direct instrument of Syria in Lebanon's politics was the Ba'ath Party.<sup>44</sup> Lebanese political leaders occasionally travel to Damascus for consultation with the Syrian leaders on state matters. Many families in Syria and Lebanon are related and there is continuous migration between the two states. As many as a quarter to half a million Syrian labourers have found employment in Lebanon, often in construction and manual jobs.<sup>45</sup> More recently, Syria has encouraged the emigration of Alawites to northern Lebanon, where their growing numbers have brought them into a confrontation with the Sunni Moslems of Tripoli. The Alawites are a minority sect among Shiite Moslems, and Assad belongs to

this community. There is some speculation on Assad's political motivation in promoting Alawite migration to northern Lebanon.<sup>46</sup>

Politically, Lebanon and Syria have often clashed. Lebanon developed a pro-western orientation while Syria developed a pro-Soviet policy. Syria was very unhappy with Lebanon's aloof policy toward the Arab states and its refusal to support the "Arab cause" reflected in the 1958 civil war.

(iii) Economic interests. A first look at the economic systems of Syria and Lebanon reveals that the gaps between the two in many ways could not be greater: Syria has a socialist regime and a planned economy, while Lebanon has a liberal economic system based on a "laissez-faire" policy. Syria used the Lebanese import and transit trade to increase its income from customs levies, while Lebanon strongly advocated an open flow of trade and financial transactions between the two countries.<sup>47</sup>

The trade between the two was composed of the export of agricultural products from Syria to Lebanon and manufactured products from Lebanon to Syria. A customs union between the two states was cancelled in 1950. Whenever there was tension between the states, as in 1969, Syria closed their common boundary and, in 1973, the border was closed for 100 days.<sup>48</sup> In the mid-1970s the volume of trade between Syria and Lebanon reached 38 million Lebanese pounds (Syria to Lebanon) and 166 million from Lebanon to Syria.<sup>49</sup> Syria is Lebanon's outlet to the eastern Arab states and Syria is defending the hundreds of thousands of Syrian workers in Lebanon, demanding that social security and labour laws be applied to Syrian workers as they are applied to Lebanese workers.<sup>50</sup> Between 1950 and 1960, an estimated capital of 300 million Syrian pounds was transferred from Syria to Lebanon and Syria declared several times that it considered it as Syrian property.<sup>51</sup>

Before Syria invaded Lebanon in 1976, during the civil war, it kept its influence on the events via al-Saiqa, a Syrian-supported Palestinian organization, a member organization in the PLO. Al-Saiqa was a direct instrument of the Syrian regime and obeyed it -- instead of the PLO command.

Syria invaded Lebanon upon the Christians' request for Syrian assistance and after Syrian efforts of mediation between the warring parties failed. In November 1976, the Syrian army occupied all of Lebanon except the South. The Riyadh Conference approved Syrian occupation of Lebanon as part of the Arab Deterrent Force. Syria had three divisions in Lebanon (30,000 soldiers) which became the most important element in the Arab Deterrent Force. Syrian invasion of Lebanon stopped the civil war and brought back law and order to the country. In 1979, the small Sudanese and Saudi forces in the ADF left Lebanon, and the Syrians remained as the only "peacekeeping force". In 1980 the Syrians redeployed their forces in Lebanon. They left Sidon and Beirut and moved them to the Beqaa and Lake Karoun area. Syrian forces also remained in and around Tripoli and along the Beirut-Damascus Road.

Prior to the establishment of the "Grand Liban" in 1920, a large section of Lebanon including the Beqaa and Tripoli was part of Syria.<sup>51</sup> Syrian occupation of Lebanon had an impact on every aspect of life in the country, especially on Lebanese politics. Their very presence, as well as the direct pressure exerted by Syria on some reluctant deputies to vote for Ilyas Sarkis, affected the final outcome of the elections.<sup>52</sup> But the most important Syrian influence is found in the Beqaa and in Akkar (Fig.4).

Here a process of "Syriification" took place. For all purposes, the Syrians annexed this territory to Syria and administered it directly.<sup>53</sup> On the symbolic level, Sarkis' picture has been replaced by Assad's and Syrian flags replaced Lebanese flags. The Syrians are reportedly issuing identity cards to the Beqaa residents and collecting taxes. According to some reports, the Syrians took over some Lebanese electricity generating plants to compensate for their own shortages, exploited the Zaharani refineries, imposed discriminatory commercial conditions and exploited Lebanon's valuable entrepot trade.<sup>54</sup>

Under Syrian occupation, hashish cultivation and manufacturing has flourished and, according to some sources, the Syrians profited from the hashish trade. Perhaps the most important indication of Syria's intentions in the Akkar is the Syrian Alawite regime's encouragement of Syrian Alawites' migration to Akkar -- to introduce grass-roots' support for Syria in an area which is more or less homogeneously Sunni. Also, living in this district is a large Maronite community, led by the pro-Syrian clan of Franjeh.<sup>55</sup> The Beqaa is a strategically crucial area for Syria's security and it does not seem likely, at present, that Syria will evacuate its troops from the Beqaa and Akkar. Optional solutions for the Lebanese crisis will have to consider the territorial presence of Syria in Lebanon as an uncompromised reality.

#### Israel in Lebanon

Until 1969, the boundary between Israel and Lebanon was very quiet, with no terror, sabotage or infiltration activities undertaken from that side on Israel. But the Cairo Agreement, which allowed the Palestinians free access to the border area for their terror attacks, changed that situation. After 1969, some 2,000 to 2,500 Palestinian fighters were located in Arqoub and south Lebanon and raided Israel frequently. Israel retaliated frequently with air, sea or commando actions and, as a result of this Israeli-Palestinian war, many of the Shiite peasants living in the south left their villages and moved to Beirut.<sup>56</sup> The situation changed during the 1975-6 civil war. Many Palestinians moved north to participate in the war. The Lebanese government had abandoned the south to the Palestinians years before and the Lebanese Army disintegrated. Some Christian villages found themselves totally isolated from northern Lebanon, surrounded by Shiite villages which were occupied by the Palestinians. These Christian villages turned to Israel for medical assistance and for other basic needs, such as food supply, water, electricity and telephone connections which had been cut by the Palestinians. Thus, the first Israeli involvement in the south was based on humanitarian assistance only. (Simultaneously, however, Israel was supplying arms to the Phalangist militia in Jounieh). When the civil war ended, Israel helped to organize and train a small Christian militia, which had been established in order to prevent the return of the Palestinians. The Palestinians then returned to the south and tried to regain their extraterritorial bases near the border, while the Christian villages, assisted by Israel, opposed them. Between 1976 and 1978 a local war took place in the south and villages and towns changed hands frequently. Many villages and towns were deserted and their residents moved to the north.<sup>57</sup> In 1978, Israel invaded Lebanon in the "Litani Operation", which was aimed at eliminating all Palestinian presence from the area extending from the border to the Litani River. The Litani Operation was decided on after Palestinians had attacked a civilian bus on

the Israeli coastal road near Tel Aviv. As a result of this operation, Haddad, the commander of the local militia, extended his control over a security belt 80 km. long and 2 to 12 km. wide -- a total area of 700 sq. km. and a population of 100,000 people -- mostly Shiites (Fig.4). The Israeli forces stayed in Lebanon for 90 days and, when they returned to Israel, a U.N. Interim Force (UNIFIL) of 6,000 men was deployed in order to police the south.<sup>58</sup>

The Palestinian attacks on Israel from the south decreased though they did not cease completely. Meanwhile a quiet understanding evolved between Israel and Syria that the Litani would be considered a "red line" beyond which no Syrian or Palestinian forces would be allowed. But, in 1979, the Syrian and Lebanese governments wished to place Lebanese army units in Haddad's areas in the south. Haddad (supported by Israel) objected, claiming that there was no Lebanese army and that the Syrians intended to deploy Syrian soldiers in the south. In 1980 and 1981, Israel clashed with Syria over the deployment of Syrian missiles in the Beqaa and Israel and the PLO continued their fighting on Lebanese soil.

The fifth Arab-Israeli war was fought in Lebanon primarily by Israel and the PLO, but also by Syria.<sup>59</sup> Israel invaded Lebanon in June 1982, claiming that its sole purpose was to destroy the PLO infrastructure in South Lebanon. But the limited scope evolved into a "grand plan" for a new order in Lebanon when the Israeli army reached Beirut. While Israel succeeded in the destruction of the PLO infrastructure in Beirut, it failed in its political strategy. Its main ally, Bashir Gemayel proved himself unreliable and was assassinated after he was elected president.<sup>60</sup> Israel's entry into West Beirut and the massacres in Sabra and Shatila discredited Israel in the eyes of the world and opposition inside Israel to the Lebanese war increased. Israel withdrew from Beirut in the fall of 1982 and its hopes for normalization of its relationship with Lebanon, based on the Israel-Lebanon Agreement of 17 May, 1983, were unfulfilled. Amin Gemayel had no wish to tie himself to Israel and, under Syrian and Lebanese Moslem pressures, cancelled the 1983 Lebanese-Israeli Agreement. In 1983, Israel withdrew to a new line on the Awali River-Jabal Baruk line (Fig.3). The attempts of Israel to reach agreement with the Lebanese government, on the deployment of the Lebanese army and UNIFIL forces in areas which Israel would evacuate after a further withdrawal, reached a deadlock at the beginning of 1985. In the summer of 1985 Israel withdrew all its forces from Lebanon, and returned to its policy of 1978 of individual military penetration into Lebanon according to its military needs.

# Notes to Chapter three

- 1 Toubi, 1980, 104
- 2 Salibi, 1976, 98-103
- 3 Deeb, 1980, 4
- 4 Stoakes, 1975, 214
- 5 Barakat, 1977, 4
- 6 Salem, 1979, 447-8
- 7 Farsoun, 1976, 15-17
- 8 Grimaldi, 1978, 14-17
- 9 Klich, 1983, 12-13
- 10 Bustros, 1982, 91-117; Whittingham, 1978, 9-13
- 11 Khalidi, 1979, 108; Klich, 1983, 12
- 12 Stork, 1983, 8; Mishlawi, 1980, 2-3
- 13 Khalidi, 1979, 61
- 14 Stork, 1983, 8; Muir, 1983, 12-14
- 15 Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol 29, 1983, 32533
- 16 Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol 30, 1984, 32888-32890
- 17 Muir, 1984, 2-4
- 18 Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol 30, 1984, 32889
- 19 Muir, 1983, 16; Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol.30, 1984, 32645
- 20 Middle East Magazine 103, 1983, 12
- 21 Stork, 1983, 10
- 22 Deeb, 1980, 71
- 23 Muir, 1983, 13; Keesing's Contemporary Archives, Vol 30, 32890; Mishlawi, 1978, 23
- 24 Munro, 1983, 17-18
- 25 Salem, 1979, 450-4
- 26 Faris, 1981, 352-70
- 27 Salem, 1979, 450-54; Sayigh, 1978, 101-19
- 28 Aulas, 1983, 26-28; Lanir and Dobronsky, 1983, 8-72
- 29 Faris, 1981, 352-70; Sirriyyeh, 1976, 73-89
- 30 Sirriyyeh, 1976, 73-89
- 31 Toubi, 1980, 100; Salem, 1979, 450-54
- 32 Said, 1982, 301-8
- 33 Ulmert, 1982, 36-44; Lanir and Dobronsky, 1983, 68-70
- 34 Salibi, 1976, 54; Gordon, 1980, 94-6
- 35 Gordon, 1980, 94-5
- 36 Salibi, 1976, 44; Salem, 1979, 450-55
- 37 Gordon, 1980, 100
- 38 Said, 1982, 305
- 39 Eitan, 1983, 9-13
- 40 Avi-Ran, 1982, 3; Heller, 1980, 56
- 41 Facts on File January 10, 1976, 9; Rondot, 1947
- 42 Avi-Ran, 1982, 3-6
- 43 Gordon, 1980, 91-4; Deeb, 1980, 122
- 44 Deeb, 1980, 123
- 45 Gordon, 1980, 91-4; Hudson, 1968, 95-100
- 46 Jansen, 1983, 7; Muir, 1983, 4
- 47 Hudson, 1968, 90-105
- 48 Smith, 1974, 184-5
- 49 Olson, 1984, 25-28
- 50 Smith, 1974, 282



- 51 Olson, 1984, 25-28
- 52 Deeb, 1980, 122; Rabinovich, 1984, 113
- 53 Deeb, 1980, 131
- 54 Rabinovich, 1984, 113
- 55 The Financial Times, September 16, 1976; The Daily Telegraph, November 26, 1979; Middle East Contemporary Survey 1980-81, 170
- 56 Jansen, 1983, 213
- 57 Salibi, 1976, 44
- 58 Gordon, 1980, 93
- 59 Reilly, 1982, 16-20; Bustros, 1982, 91-131; Rabinovich, 1984, 107
- 60 Schiff and Yaari, 1984, 21-39

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The history of the nation-building of Lebanese society points to its failure to establish a viable political community. There is mutual irrelevance and antagonism among the units comprising the Lebanese nation, and a development of separate value-systems or a confessional *raison d'être* for each of the units. As a result, a negative mutual responsiveness developed, which eventually led to overt conflict among the units -- i.e., communal strife and civil wars among the various ethnic-religious communities of Lebanon. The disintegration and dismemberment of the Lebanese state and society can be seen at two levels, the polity level and the territorial level. On the polity level, centripetal forces were built into the constitution and the "National Pact", strengthening ethnic schism instead of eliminating it. The legislature does not accurately represent the population distribution among the various religious communities and the Moslem communities: especially the Shiites are under-represented. There has been a failure to implement any structural reforms, widening the gap between the institutional framework and the reality, Lebanese politics.

Confessionalism also became institutionalized in the executive, often paralyzing the regular activities of the latter. Suspensions and feuds between Moslem and Maronite oligarchs have been reflected in the frequent changes of government and the failure of the government bureaucracy to administer the country efficiently and to perform basic functions, such as tax collection or the enforcement of law and order. Most conspicuous in the collapse of the polity has been the disintegration of the Lebanese army along confessional lines. All efforts to reconstruct the army between 1976 and 1984 have failed and the units which were established collapsed during the fighting between the various communities. Security, law and order have been provided by non-Lebanese forces, such as the PLO and the occupying armies of Israel and Syria.

The Lebanese political system has been a unique, extremely precarious form of non-government, marked by periodic outbreaks of fighting between contending factions and militias in different parts of the country. A very important contribution to the collapse of the state has been its liberal openness, which afforded anarchic leeway to non-Lebanese political organizations, especially the Palestinians. There is no doubt that the Lebanese problem was brewing long before the armed presence of the PLO became a factor in Lebanon's delicate sectarian equilibrium, but the Palestinians upset the balance and created a proto-state in the South, thus accelerating the disintegration of the Lebanese state.

In the beginning of 1985, Lebanese sovereign authority hardly exists. A large foreign force occupies the country -- approximately 30,000 Syrian soldiers. All the territory of the state is partitioned between foreign forces and sectarian proto-states. The legal government is unable to implement its power even in Beirut, the partitioned capital city. Much of the infrastructure of the country is in a shambles and hundreds of thousands of its citizens have sought security and employment outside the country. Another sign of the dismemberment of the state has been its inability to provide a viable army to occupy the areas which Israel decided to evacuate in February of 1985. Only a revolutionary change, both structural and territorial, could bring about a transformation in Lebanon. Such a change seems very unlikely to occur.

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